

Message Text

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3074

INFO AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR PRIORITY

S E C R E T SINGAPORE 3106

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MASS, MY, SN

SUBJ: VISIT OF U.S. TEAM TO DISCUSS COUNTERINSURGENCY EQUIP-
MENT AND TRAINING

REF: SINGAPORE 3035

1. I MET WITH S.R. NATHAN, DIRECTOR, SECURITY AND INTELLIGENCE DIVISION OF MINDEF, JULY 17 TO DISCUSS DETAILS OF THE FORTH-COMING VISIT OF COUNTERINSURGENCY TEAM. NATHAN SAID SCHEDULING HAD BEEN SOMEWHAT COMPLICATED BY TIMING OF VISIT OF THAI PRIME MINISTER KUKRIT, WHO WILL ARRIVE IN SINGAPORE AT 1745 JULY 24 AND LEAVE ON JULY 27. HOWEVER, HE INDICATED GOS WOULD RECEIVE TEAM AT MINDEF AT 0900 OR 0930 AND PROVIDE TWO OR THREE HOUR BRIEFING WHICH WOULD INCLUDE DISCUSSION OF GOS REQUIREMENTS IN FIELD OF COUNTERINSURGENCY. FOLLOWING LUNCHEON, TEAM WOULD RECONVENE AT MINDEF FOR FULL DISCUSSION DURING WHICH U.S. TEAM WOULD BE ABLE TO COMMENT ON GOS NEEDS AND POSSIBLE U.S. ABILITY TO SATISFY THEM. NATHAN RECOGNIZED THE TEAM WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO MAKE COMMITMENTS.

2. NATHAN INDICATED THAT NO SPECIFIC PROGRAM WAS AS YET PLANNED FOR JULY 25, BUT THAT DISCUSSIONS COULD CONTINUE IF BOTH SIDES FELT IT WOULD BE USEFUL. NATHAN NOTED THAT DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER OF DEFENSE, DR. GOH KENG SWEE, WOULD HOST EITHER A LUNCHEON OR DINNER FOR THE TEAM ON THE 24TH.

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3. NATHAN SAID THE BRIEFING WOULD BE DIVIDED INTO TWO PARTS.

THE FIRST PART WOULD CONVEY GOS PERCEPTION OF THE SECURITY PROBLEM IN MALAYSIA AND ITS BEARING ON SINGAPORE. THIS PORTION OF THE BRIEFING WOULD INCLUDE DISCUSSION OF THE ORIGINS OF THE CPM THREAT TO SINGAPORE AND THE CHANGES WHICH HAD DEVELOPED AS RESULT OF SUBSEQUENT POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN SINGAPORE. THE SECOND PORTION WOULD COVER THE ORDER OF BATTLE OF THE SINGAPORE ARMED FORCES, FINANCIAL AND OTHER RELATED PROBLEMS AND WEAKNESSES IN THE CURRENT SINGAPORE SECURITY ESTABLISHMENT AND HOW THE GOS IS PLANNING TO OVERCOME THEM.

4. NATHAN SAID GOS PARTICIPANTS WOULD INCLUDE HIMSELF AS COORDINATOR, THE DIRECTOR OF THE INTERNAL SECURITY DIVISION OF THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS, LIM CHYE HENG, THE TWO PERMANENT SECRETARIES OF DEFENSE, PANG TEE POW AND TAY SEOW HUAH, THE DIRECTOR OF THE GENERAL STAFF, COLONEL WINSTON CHOO, AND THE DIRECTORS OF LOGISTICS, FINANCE AND TRAINING IN MINDEF.

5. DURING COURSE OF DISCUSSION, I SAID THAT I UNDERSTOOD PRIME MINISTER RAZAK WAS BOTH AWARE AND PLEASED THAT THE TEAM WOULD BE VISITING SINGAPORE AS WELL AS KUALA LUMPUR. I ASKED NATHAN, WHO HAD JUST RETURNED FROM MEETING OF ASEAN INTELLIGENCE OFFICERS IN KUALA LUMPUR, WHETHER HE HAD OPPORTUNITY TO DISCUSS THE TEAM'S VISIT WITH HIS MALAYSIAN COUNTERPART. HE REPLIED NEGATIVELY AND NOTED THAT SUBJECTS OF TEAM'S VISIT HAD BEEN HELD VERY CLOSELY WITHIN GOS. HE ALSO COMMENTED THAT COOPERATION WITH MALAYSIA ON SECURITY MATTERS WAS CURRENTLY QUITE LIMITED AND THAT THERE WAS AGREEMENT TO CONSULT ON THIS SUBJECT ONLY AT THE HIGHEST LEVEL BETWEEN THE TWO PRIME MINISTERS. HE INDICATED THAT BELOW THIS LEVEL AND ESPECIALLY ON THE MALAYSIAN SIDE THERE WERE CONFLICTING VIEWPOINTS WITH RESPECT TO SECURITY COOPERATION BETWEEN THE TWO GOVERNMENTS.

6. COMMENT. IT WOULD APPEAR FROM NATHAN'S REMARKS THAT GOM AND GOS HAVE PROBABLY NOT COORDINATED THEIR PLANNING FOR THE TEAM'S VISIT. THE MALAYSIAN INSPECTOR GENERAL OF POLICE, HANIFF BIN OMAR, IS CURRENTLY VISITING SINGAPORE AND IT IS POSSIBLE THAT HE MAY USE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO CONFER WITH GOS ON PREPARATIONS FOR THE TEAM'S VISIT. HOWEVER, HE TOLD REPORTERS AT THE AIRPORT THAT HE AND HIS WIFE WERE ON A 7-DAY OFFICIAL VISIT, RETURNING A VISIT MADE BY THE SINGAPORE COMMISSIONER OF POLICE IN MARCH.

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